

Message Text

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73

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 SPC-03

CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 SS-20 NSC-10 STR-08

CEA-02 SCEM-02 INT-08 FPC-01 SCI-06 NSF-04 PA-04

PRS-01 USIA-15 DRC-01 /173 W
----- 061793

R 210905Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9669

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA DECLAS 5/21/74

TAGS: ENRG SN

SUBJ: SINGAPORE MEASURES TO COMBAT PETROLEUM CUTBACKS

SUMMARY

ON NOV. 15 SINGAPORE INSTITUTED MEASURES DESIGNED TO
REDUCE CONSUMPTION OF ELECTRICITY AND GASOLINE BY 10 PERCENT.

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MEASURES ARE VOLUNTARY BUT WITH THREAT OF FINES OR

BLACKOUTS IF DECREASED CONSUMPTION NOT REALIZED. IN MEETING WITH EMBOFFS NOV. 20, GOS OFFICIALS CONFIRMED THAT THEY HAD TOLD OIL COMPANIES NOT TO TAKE ANY ACTION HARMFUL TO SINGAPORE'S SUPPLY OF CRUDE. END SUMMARY.

1. MINISTRY OF FINANCE RELEASED GUIDELINES ON NOV. 15 TO COPE WITH CUTBACK ON PETROLEUM SUPPLIES TO SINGAPORE. MINISTRY ADVISED PUBLIC TO ECONOMIZE AND NOT HOARD GASOLINE, ALSO TO REDUCE USE OF ELECTRICITY TO 90 PERCENT OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S (OCTOBER) CONSUMPTION. (ELECTRICITY IS LARGEST USER OF OIL IN SINGAPORE.) DIRECTIVE CONTAINED DETAILED LIST OF INSTRUCTIONS, MOST IMPORTANT OF WHICH WERE SUGGESTED RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF AIR-CONDITIONERS, ELIMINATION OF UNNECESSARY DRIVING AND REDUCTION IN COMMERCIAL LIGHTING. PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD (PUB) WILL MONITOR PROGRAM AND MAY FINE FOR EXCESSIVE USE OF ELECTRICITY.

2. CIRCULAR WAS ALSO SENT TO PERMSECS OF ALL MINISTRIES BY FINANCE MINISTRY ON NOV. 15 TO INSURE THAT ALL GOVERNMENT BODIES COOPERATE IN REDUCING ELECTRICAL CONSUMPTION.

3. SPATE OF ARTICLES HAVE APPEARED IN LOCAL PRESS EMPHASIZING NEED TO CONSERVE GASOLINE BUT WITHOUT HOARDING IT. ARTICLES EMPHASIZE THAT SINGAPORE HAS NOT FACED ANY SHORTAGE YET AND IF PUBLIC COOPERATES IN CARRYING OUT MEASURES, CRISIS MAY BE AVERTED.

4. US BUSINESSMEN REPORT THAT THEIR COMPANIES' OPERATIONS HAVE NOT BEEN DISRUPTED BY MEASURES. ALTHOUGH SOME PRICES FOR INDUSTRIAL FUEL HAVE INCREASED, THERE IS NO RATIONING OF FUEL OIL TO INDUSTRY.

5. EMBOFFS MET WITH NGIAM TONG DOW, CHAIRMAN OF GOVERNMENT-INDUSTRY COMMITTEE ON OIL, AND PERMSEC, MINISTRY FINANCE NOV. 30 TO DISCUSS EFFECT OF PETROLEUM CUTBACKS ON SINGAPORE. NGIAM GENERALLY VERIFIED WHAT OIL COMPANIES HAD PREVIOUSLY TOLD EMBASSY ON GOS POSITION AND CONCERNS. HE CONFIRMED THAT GOS HAD DIRECTED OIL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMPANIES NOT TO TAKE ANY ACTION WHICH WOULD JEOPARDIZE SINGAPORE'S SUPPLY OF CRUDE AND TURN COUNTRY INTO "ANOTHER ROTTERDAM".

6. ON ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURES, NGIAM SAID GOS WAS READY FOR GASOLINE RATIONING IF NECESSARY. SYSTEM WOULD BE BASED ON PERCENTAGE REDUCTION OF PRESENT USE; GOS WOULD USE AUTO'S ENGINE SIZE AS ONE YARDSTICK FOR ALLOCATION.

NGIAM STATED THAT IF VOLUNTARY MEASURES (PARA 2 &3) WERE FULLY OBSERVED, THERE WOULD BE NO NEED FOR RATIONING OR ELECTRICAL BLACKOUTS. HE SAID SINGAPORE DID NOT WANT TO ASK OIL COMPANIES FOR PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR DOMESTIC MARKET WHICH WOULD LEAD TO REDUCTION OF EXPORTS OF SINGAPORE-REFINED PRODUCTS. COMMENT:

NGIAM DID NOT APPEAR COMPLETELY INFORMED ON WHAT EFFECT CRUDE CUTBACK WAS HAVING ON SINGAPORE ECONOMY. ALTHOUGH HE SAID POL STOCKS HAD DECLINED; HE DEFERRED TO OIL COMPANIES FOR INFO ON CHANGES IN CRUDE IMPORTS FOR MID-EAST AND SAID IT WAS TOO EARLY TO ASSESS SUCCESS OF VOLUNTARY REDUCED CONSUMPTION PROGRAM.

7. IN SEPARATE MEETING PUB TOLD EMBOFF THAT VOLUNTARY PROGRAM HAD RESULTED IN 4 PERCENT REDUCTION OF CONSUMPTION DURING FIRST WEEK. PUB MAY ADOPT TEMPORARY SURCHARGE AS MEANS TO FURTHER REDUCE CONSUMPTION.
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